

Missionary Readings.

A DREAM.

A FEW months ago we were out in a Chinese boat for a little trip. One evening after our four little ones were all asleep, I sat down for a quiet hour of reading, and took up Baxter's Reformed Pastor. For a week or so I had been enjoying the earlier chapters, and now turned to the one on Pride, which made a deep impression upon my mind. Later my husband and myself spread our bedding upon the floor and lay down to rest. But soon the scene changed, and I had been transported to heaven, with the experiences of the Judgment Day passing before my eyes. An indescribable quiet and halo of glory most impressed me as I stood on the margin of an innumerable company, near a large open space, where occurred the incidents I wish to describe. I seemed to know that the throne of God was not far distant, and that among the heavenly hosts were those I loved; but I was conscious that I had not come to remain with them, and my whole interest centered in the area before me. I knew, too, that not only I, but all the dwellers in heaven, and even God Himself, were watching with me, those wonderful scenes.

Before us had risen a building which was made up of the actions, thoughts and words of life, and beside it stood the person whose life is represented. In very conspicuous places were large bundles of good deeds. Indeed, so many and so large were these, that I felt a thrill of pleasure for the person standing there, and was surprised on looking at him, and then upon the faces of those near me, to see no pride or exaltation, nothing but a profound expectancy. As I wondered at this, the structure was in a blaze, and from the many places where had been the good deeds, the person himself appeared. Here, there, everywhere, he was visible; sometimes pushing himself almost entirely out of the fire, trying by every possible movement and contortion to make himself seen. It was perfectly evident that he did not fear the fire, but his every motion said: "Here am I; look at me." This mass blazed on, and soon was all consumed. Only a few ashes remained, through which, however, glimmered a foundation of solid gold. The man quickly passed me to retake his position among the heavenly throng, and I thought, "How ashamed he must be;" but no one upbraided him, though there was a sorrow that could be felt in the very air of heaven. All attention was soon turned upon the same spot again, where had risen another building much smaller than the first, and this, too, was soon ablaze. The person of whose life deeds it was composed was standing beside it, and I remember how sorry I felt for him, that his life seemed to have amounted to so little. But as the fire burned on, the pile became a mass of burnished gold, and really seemed to increase in size and beauty as the flames became hotter. Then the fire died away, having accomplished its work, leaving gold and precious stones in such preciousness of arrangement as only heaven itself could furnish. I looked for a proud, exultant bearing as this man passed by me; but he took his way as modestly and as humbly as the

other, though a shout of joy and praise rose from the myriads about me—praise, not to him, but to the Son of God—and then a joy that could be felt took possession of us all.

And now pile after pile rose in quick succession, by each one of which the person whose life it represented immediately appeared, and then the fire applied its test. Larger or smaller, as the buildings might be, I soon learned not to judge its real worth from its first appearance. The saddest part of the test was the burning of those deeds which were done to be seen of men, when the doer, by all possible contortions, strove to show himself in the burning mass. Often a small unpretending structure loomed up into beautiful proportions as the fire burned on, and stood afterwards a grand testimony to the grace of God. Often a large, imposing mass of seemingly good works showed, on the test of the fire, only the deformities of the doer of them, and at last there would remain little or nothing of it at all. The golden foundation, however, was always there, and shimmered under the edges of the golden masses, or gleamed through the remaining ashes with no change. Suddenly an edifice arose in size and splendor far exceeding any of the others. I gazed anxiously to see what the fire would work on this, but just as it blazed up I was carried away.

"Go back to earth and remember," and then I was in the same little Chinese boat, wide awake. For days the reality of all this so impressed me that I felt as if I were living a different life, and those five wonderful verses in the third chapter of Corinthians a living voice:

"For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

"Now, if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

"Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

"If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

"If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

AN APPEAL TO THE CHURCHES FROM THE STUDENT VOLUNTEERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

WE have received this appeal to the churches, with the request that we should pass it on to our readers. We make the following extracts:—

"At this time last year, two hundred and fifty college students were gathered at Mt. Hermon to study the Bible. Of these, one hundred declared their purpose to go as foreign missionaries. Since then the work has spread from college to college throughout the United States and Canada, until more than *twenty-two hundred students* (five hundred and fifty of whom were women) have volunteered for the foreign service. One hundred of these are once again among the students gathered for Bible-study across the river from Mt. Hermon.

"It is our desire to place before the churches some of the reasons which have led us to decide.